

**TITLE:** *'Not Just a Boys Game':* Programme evaluation of a multi-agency cricket intervention designed to reduce gender inequity in a city in the East of England.

Previous feminist research demonstrates that women's participation in sport is subject to patriarchal values, which produce and reproduce gender inequity in elite sport (Rowe, D. (2004). *Critical Reading: Sport, Culture and Media*. Berkshire. McGraw Hill.). Cricket is one sport in which patriarchy remains prevalent. Despite the recent success of the England Women's cricket team, female participation in elite cricket remains low. The latest Active People Survey suggests the number of women participating in cricket has decreased between 2008 and 2010, further widening the gender gap (Sport England, 2011).

This key aim of this study was to evaluate an intervention with the stated aim of reducing gender inequity in cricket in a city in the East of England. The intervention was conducted in conjunction with a multi-agency partnership developed by the authors, including an ECB premier league club, county board and University. A needs assessment highlighted the lack of opportunities for women's cricket. The intervention therefore targeted women of all cricket abilities, with a view to creating a sustainable women's team. Project actions included sourcing facilities, staff and equipment, producing advertising material and facilitating partnership work.

This study employed a theory-driven programme evaluation to assess the effectiveness of this cricket intervention. Programme evaluation uses programme theory to assess the efficacy of sports development interventions (Rossi et al., 2004, *Evaluation: A systematic approach*. Sage, London.). In this case, the programme's theory is founded upon a feminist rationale. Critical success factors have been incorporated. These included assessing sustainable participation rates. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and participants will be completed to evaluate programme effectiveness.